

Remaining and Frequently Asked Questions on Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) From the Planning Commission's 11/23/20 Meeting

Septic	
1. How can ADUs handle their on-site sewage disposal?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property owners can tie the ADU into an existing system, if the existing system is determined to be adequately designed, functioning, and has the additional capacity needed. Additional Reserve Areas may need to be designated. • Property owners can expand the capacity of an existing system and tie the ADU in, if site conditions allow and if the existing system is determined to be adequately designed and functioning and there is enough Reserve Area. • Property owners can install a new septic system to serve the ADU if site conditions allow. • If none of these options are achievable, the ADU may not be allowed, even if the proposal meets zoning code.
2. Is there a minimum septic size for ADUs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freestanding structures (detached ADUs) require a minimum of a two-bedroom septic capacity (240 gallons/day) per state law. • Example: a property has an existing two-bedroom house located on a three-bedroom capacity septic system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There would not be enough capacity in the existing system to tie in a new detached ADU per state law because freestanding structures require a minimum two-bedroom capacity. • The property owner could look into expanding the existing system, or installing a new system. • The minimum septic size for an attached ADU, would be based on the bedroom count in the ADU, and may be modified by any high-water-use fixtures proposed, as determined by the on-site designer's consultation with the owner, prior to design and submission.

Water	
3. Are ADUs considered an additional water connection?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the ADU is in a Group A Water System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group A Water systems are regulated by the State Department of Health (DOH) and have an approved capacity expressed in Equivalent Residential Units. • For both attached and detached ADUs, it is up to the water systems to decide if they have sufficient Equivalent Residential Units (ERUs) to support the proposed development. • If the ADU is to be served by a Group B System: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These systems are regulated by Island County. • Attached ADUs – do not require an additional water connection but may need to be evaluated from a hydraulic perspective, for the ability to serve an ADU. • Detached ADUs – do not require an additional water connection but may need to be evaluated from a hydraulic perspective, for the ability to serve an ADU. • If the ADU is served by an individual well it is not considered another connection, but a WAV is required
4. What is an Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public water systems, especially small systems, mainly serve single-family residences. • On average, each of these single-family residential customers uses a similar amount of water over a day. • Customers from nonresidential and multifamily units (apartments and condominiums) can have significantly different demands. • When designing or evaluating a water system, regulators compare non-residential and multifamily water demands to the typical amount of water a single-family residential unit uses. • The term “equivalent residential unit” (ERU) is used to refer to this basis of comparison.
5. What is a Water Availability Verification (WAV)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a form either completed by the public water system or by a licensed well driller for private wells which verifies that an adequate water supply is available to serve the proposed development.
6. Do ADUs require a Water Availability Verification (WAV)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County has historically only required a WAV for detached ADUs. • Based on public feedback, the County is considering requiring WAVs for all ADUs, whether detached or attached.

<p>7. If a water system denies a connection to an ADU, can the applicant drill a private well to serve that ADU?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes, provided that they can meet the siting criteria • Private wells are regulated through a passive system, rather than an active one. This means, that wells need to be sited appropriately in relation to structures, septic systems etc. Well drillers are licensed by the State Department of Ecology and must operate appropriately to maintain their license. • Before an ADU could be constructed on a private well, a WAV would be required.
<p>8. How are water systems notified of private well proposals in their service area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The water systems are not notified of private well proposals. Private well drilling is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Ecology and does not require notification of public water systems.
<p>9. How do water systems prioritize who gets water connections (new single-family house versus new ADU)?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is up to the individual water system to establish. For instance, some water systems provide new water connections on a lottery basis.
<p>8. Could the addition of an ADU in an existing water system result in the need for a water system service area boundary change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the water system does not have any water connections left to provide, and it is determined that the ADU would trigger the need for a new water connection, then the water system would need to work with the State DOH to obtain approval to supply more connections. • If the ADU were on a parcel within the existing service area boundary, the boundary would not require an adjustment. However, depending on the situation, it may require infrastructure upgrades or an update of the water system's plan.
<p>9. Could the addition of an ADU trigger the water system to bump up to a higher regulatory category?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Two-party wells are designed to serve two water connections. Even though the ADU does not require an additional water connection per County requirements, if that ADU serves an additional family, it could bump the two-party well to higher regulatory requirements and monitoring. • Group B water systems serve fewer than fifteen service connections and fewer than twenty-five people per day. If a Group B system is at the top end these limits, an ADU that serves a separate family, could bump the Group B to a Group A system. • It is the responsibility of the water system to update and report the population they serve when an additional family is added.

10. What is fire-flow?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The rate of water delivery needed for the purpose of fighting fires in addition to requirements for normal domestic maximum instantaneous demand as referenced in guidelines published by the Public Works Department entitled, "Design Standards for Public Water Supply."
12. Are there plans to provide funding to water systems that will need to upgrade their infrastructure to accommodate the additional development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not at this time. In many cases though there are grant programs which can to help fund water infrastructure projects. https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/v/sciwaterfundingsummary
13. How are ADUs in Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas reviewed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Activities subject to review in Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas are listed in ICC 8.09.097H. Two or more Single Family Residences on an off-site drainfield or more than 2 Single Family Residences on a single parcel area subject to review.
14. How does Island County review for sea water intrusion?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICC 8.09.099 Table 2 outlines the projects that require a seawater intrusion risk analysis in low, medium, high, and very high risk category areas.

Other	
13. What distinguishes an ADU from just an additional bedroom/den/office/studio?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The installation of a full kitchen and stove is what triggers review of the structure as an ADU.
14. How will ADUs be prevented from being used as short-term rentals?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Board of County Commissioners has indicated they would like to tee-up an in-depth evaluation of, the scale of the issue and potential solutions, for a work plan item in the coming years.
15. Will the proposed increase in square footage for ADUs affect Health Department review and requirements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The increase in square footage will not affect the Health Department's review process for ADUs.
16. How is storm water looked at for ADUs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Storm water is addressed by ICC 11.03. Island County Public Works assesses drainage for proposed development in Critical Drainage Areas, and areas in proximity to steep slopes and other critical areas.